



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **KEVIN SHELLEY**

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Statement By Secretary of State Kevin Shelley Regarding AB205/AB25 Court Ruling

SACRAMENTO, CA --- Secretary of State Kevin Shelley, a long-time supporter of same-sex marriage and equal rights for gay and lesbian couples, issued the following statement in response to Sacramento Superior Court Judge Loren E. McMaster's rejection of a lawsuit filed by conservative groups that challenge laws granting same-sex domestic partners virtually all the same rights and responsibilities as married couples.

"I applaud the court's decision to uphold the laws passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor, which will expand protections and rights for same-sex couples beginning next year," said Shelley. "This is an important victory for human rights. As the Office of the Secretary of State, we manage the Domestic Partners Registry, we have defended AB 205 in court, and we will continue to do so."

The Legislature passed two measures, AB 25 in 2001 and AB 205 in 2003, which granted same-sex couples nearly the same legal rights and responsibilities as married couples. Former Gov. Gray Davis signed both bills, and the laws go into effect in January 2005.

G. Scott Emblidge, an experienced litigator in this area from the law firm of Moscone, Emblidge & Quadra LLP, was brought on especially by the Secretary of State to personally defend the law.

The Secretary of State maintains the State Domestic Partners Registry. For more information and to download the necessary documents, please visit the Secretary of State's website at <http://www.ss.ca.gov/dpregistry>.